required to amend the Patents Act, 1970 by 31 December, 1999, in respect of scope of patentable inventions, providing for exclusions from patentability, providing a uniform term of patent protection of 20 years, alignment of compulsory licensing provisions, etc.

Government has maintained a close interface with individuals organisations and interest groups concerned and has also organised a series of Interactive Sessions on 'Approaches to the Indian Patent Law' in different cities of country between 28 June, 1999 to 9 August, 1999.

Publication of Educational Books by US based Company

1846. SHRI RAJNATH SINGH 'SURYA': Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether a proposal of US based company has been cleared for setting up 100 per cent owned publishing firm for educational books in India;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether the Indian companies were unable to produce good educational books; and

(d) how a foreign firm can produce appropriate educational material for our country?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) to (d) Yes, Sir. In accordance with the existing policy, a proposal of US based company for setting up a wholly owned subsidiary to undertake the business of publishing and distributing educational and reference books and educational materials, subject to the condition that the company would not undertake any activity prohibited under the Print-media Policy of 1955, has been cleared on the basis of recommendations of the Administrative Ministry i.e. Department of Secondary and Higher Education.

Setting up of Cement Industry

1847. SHRI RAHASBIHARI BARIK: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have a proposal to set up some cement industry in the country during Ninth Plan;

(b) if so, whether any such unit is proposed to be set up in Orissa;

(c) whether Government have also a proposal to expand the existing cement units; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (DR. RAMAN): (a) to (d) There is no proposal in the Ninth Plan to set up new cement plants or expand the existing plants in the Central Public Sector including Orissa.

Performance of Tea and Coffee Industury

1848. SHRI RAHASBIHARI BARIK: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken any steps to review the performance of tea and coffee industry in the country;

(b) if so, the production and export of tea and coffee during last three years; and

(c) the prospect thereof in 1999-2000?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI MURASOLI MARAN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Government and the respective Commodity Boards review the performance of tea and coffee industry from time to time. The production and export of tea and coffee during the last three years were as follows:—

Year	Tea (in Mn. Kgs)		Coffee (in Metric Tonnes)	
	Production	Export	Production	Export
1996-97	775.31	169.04	205000	181295
1997-98	838.02	211.26	228000	179059
1998-99	850.25	205.19	265000	211623